UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Bureau of Commercial Fisheries

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT SPECIALISTS FIND BRAZIL'S COMMERCIAL FISHERY
OUTPUT CAN BE DOUBLED RAPIDLY

Scientists from the Department of the Interior reported today that commercial fish production in the vast reservoir system of Northeast Brazil could be more than doubled by eradicating the voracious predator, the piranha.

Five specialists from the Department's Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, Fish and Wildlife Service, recently conducted a three-month study aimed at developing the protein resources of the economically depressed Northeast area. The study was made in cooperation with the Agency for International Development (AID) and the Alliance for Progress.

A detailed report by the survey team recommends that Brazilian scientists continue using rotenone against piranha, since the species is more sensitive to the chemical than more desirable species.

The report says the team is convinced that Brazil's major fishery development plans for the Northeast are basically sound and will lead to significant increases in fishery production, marketing, and consumption. It adds that the major roadblock to fisheries development in Northeast Brazil is caused by inadequate financial and technical development.

The team concludes that Northeast Brazil, with its vast multipurpose reservoir system, has the potential for raising its food production substantially in a very short time. The team also points out that fish products are among the most easily developed sources of protein.

The report recommends that AID and the Alliance for Progress favorably consider loans for developing all phases of the fisheries in the Northeast. It proposes that at least three United States specialists be detailed to Brazil for one or two years to assist in fish population studies, technology and marketing, and modernization of reservoir fishing fleets.

Another recommendation concerns a program of fellowships and training grants for several professional fishery workers in Brazil who are regarded as potential leaders in fisheries science.

The United States team making the study was headed by William E. Ripley, technical assistance coordinator, Sacramento, Calif. Other members were Bruce Kimsey, biologist, Galveston, Tex.; Robert Balkovic, marketing specialist, Harrisburg, Oreg.; Charles Lee, a food technologist of White Pigeon and Sturgis, Mich.; and John Crum, economist, Gainesville, Fla.